

OPINION 2321 (Case 3386)***Pseudocoenia* d'Orbigny, 1850 (Coelenterata, Scleractinia): proposed conservation of usage by the designation of a lectotype for the type species not approved**

Abstract. The Commission has ruled that the application to conserve the name *Pseudocoenia* d'Orbigny, 1850 by designating a new lectotype for its type species, *Pseudocoenia bernardina* d'Orbigny, 1850, is not approved.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Coelenterata; Scleractinia; *Pseudocoenia*; *Pseudocoenia bernardina*; Jurassic–Cretaceous; corals.

Ruling

- (1) It is hereby ruled that the application for the proposed conservation of the generic name *Pseudocoenia* d'Orbigny, 1850 in its accustomed usage by designating a new lectotype for its type species, *Pseudocoenia bernardina* d'Orbigny, 1850, is not approved.
- (2) No names are placed on the Official Lists or Indexes in this ruling.

History of Case 3386

An application to conserve the name *Pseudocoenia* d'Orbigny, 1850 by designating a new lectotype for its type species, *Pseudocoenia bernardina* d'Orbigny, 1850, was received from H. Löser (*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Geología, Estación Regional del Noroeste, Hermosillo, Sonora, México*), on 28 May 2006. After correspondence the case was published in BZN **64**: 79–82 (2007). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. The Case was sent to vote on 1 March 2008, receiving a majority of votes FOR the Case (8 For, 7 Against), but did not reach the needed two-thirds majority to be approved. In accordance with the Bylaws it was sent to the Commissioners for a revote on 1 December 2008. After correspondence the second round was cancelled and on advice of the Council, the author was asked to submit a new proposal requesting a neotype designation. However the author declined, explaining that the doubt about the lectotype was reasonable from the taxonomic point of view, but not because of the different type locality. He thought that it was not possible to designate a neotype since the type series might still exist. He thought that Orbigny's (1850) type specimen for this species could have been lost, but in the absence of illustrations it could not be ascertained. He also commented that the problem was complicated by the specimen numbers having been changed in the Paris Museum collection. No comments were received on this Case.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 March 2013 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN **64**: 81. At the close of the voting period on 1 June 2013 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 11: Alonso-Zarazaga, Ballerio, Fautin, Harvey, Krell, Lim, Minelli, Winston, Zhang and Zhou.

Negative votes – 14: Bogutskaya, Bouchet, Brothers, Grygier, Halliday, Kojima, Kullander, Lamas, Pape, Patterson, Rosenberg, Štys, van Tol and Yanega.

Conditional vote – 1: Kottelat.

Pyle and Ng were on leave of absence.

In the first round of voting the Commissioners commented as follows:

Voting FOR, Bouchet commented that he understood the facts as laid out by the author and approved the intention of the application. However, he was concerned that the newly selected 'lectotype' (MNHN 4472b) did not originate from the type locality Landeyron, département Ain, but instead came from Chatel-Censoir, département Yonne. Bouchet also suggested that the specimen might not have been part of the original type series and suggested that it would be safer to designate that specimen as neotype rather than lectotype. Voting FOR, Brothers also suggested that the proposed 'lectotype' should be designated as a neotype. ABSTAINING, Lamas agreed that designation of a neotype was preferable to selection of a lectotype, and suggested that the vote should have been postponed. Voting AGAINST, Kottelat said that based on the data in the application, the proposed lectotype had locality information that disagreed with that in the original description. It did not seem to be a syntype, thus could not be a lectotype. Voting AGAINST, Pape also considered that the only proper name-bearing type would be a neotype, not a lectotype. Voting AGAINST, Grygier said that he was not convinced that it was intolerable to abandon *Pseudocoenia*, which Wells had made a synonym of *Stylina*. Even if Wells's reasoning was faulty, what is done is done. Grygier added that the matter at hand now seemed to be more taxonomic than nomenclatural. As a taxonomic solution, the specimen nominated as lectotype in this proposal could just as easily be designated the holotype of a new species in a new genus that would also serve to hold the other nominal species, apart from the type species that are currently assigned to *Pseudocoenia*. Voting AGAINST, Kullander said that, although taxonomy had not been well executed in this group, he wondered if the status quo (4472 as lectotype) would have caused any problems.

In the second round Grygier, voting AGAINST, reaffirmed his earlier comment. Štys, voting AGAINST said that judging from the statement of the author of the proposal (which seemed to him insufficient), no action of the Commission concerning fixation of a mandatory type specimen of *Pseudocoenosia bernardina* d'Orbigny, 1850 (type species of *Pseudocoenosia* d'Orbigny, 1950) from d'Orbigny's specimens available at MNHN would, with the present state of the taxonomy of the genus and species, help to fix their nomenclatural and taxonomic concepts. He added that perhaps fixation of a different type species under the plenary power would be helpful. Voting AGAINST, Rosenberg said that he would have voted for this case if it had requested a neotype instead of a lectotype, a change the author of the proposal declined to make. He would also have voted in favour had it requested that *Pseudocoenia suboctionis* be made the type species of *Pseudocoenia*. Voting FOR, Kottelat said that he supported the proposal only on the condition that the

'lectotype' was in fact designated as a neotype. To designate as lectotype a specimen not from the type locality did not make sense. The applicant should first have explained why he thought that this specimen was indeed a syntype, considering that it came from a different locality. If it was not a syntype, then it could not be made lectotype. And if it was a syntype, then it did not make sense for the Commission to set aside the earlier lectotype fixation and replace it with a new lectotype. The Commission should only designate a neotype, which could be a more appropriate specimen. Voting AGAINST, Bogutskaya said that she agreed with Grygier's reasoning but did not consider it technically possible to substitute words in the original proposal. Also voting AGAINST, Brothers said that he approved the intention, but it seemed doubtful that the proposed 'lectotype' was part of the type series (in addition to the discrepancy in locality, no justification for considering it as such was provided). However, he would have voted FOR an alternative set of proposals, identically worded except substituting 'neotype' for 'lectotype'. Kojima also voted AGAINST saying that by mentioning 'Type No. 4472 [non 4472a, b]' Wells (1936, p. 128) had excluded specimens numbered '4472a' and '4472b', possibly because they were indicated to be from a locality not mentioned in the original description; however, Wells's statement was scarcely considered in the choice of a lectotype. The type status of the specimens of 'Coll. D'Orbigny 4472' was not certain as they possessed characters that did not match those in the original description. In this situation, if the name *Pseudocoenia* d'Orbigny, 1850 were to be conserved, a neotype (rather than lectotype) designation should have been proposed. But acceptance of Wells's synonymy of *Pseudocoenia* under *Stylina* Lamarck, 1816, considering that the specimens of 'Coll. D'Orbigny 4472' are syntypes of *Pseudocoenia bernardina* d'Orbigny, 1850, could be a solution. Bouchet voted AGAINST saying that the applicant was mistaken in believing that it was not possible to designate a neotype since specimens of a supposed type series could still exist. In fact the Commission could make such a designation under the plenary power. He regretted that the applicant did not follow the proposed route and preferred the designation of MNHN 4472b as the neotype of *Pseudocoenia bernardina* d'Orbigny, 1850. Lamas commented that although he voted AGAINST the proposals as set in Case 3386, he would have voted FOR alternative proposals, in which the word 'neotype' was substituted for 'lectotype' in both proposals (1) and (2).

Voting AGAINST, Kullander noted that after having considered all the comments of other Commissioners, he felt that a neotype would be a better solution to the problem. This was not the subject of the vote, however, so he stayed with his original decision.

No names are placed on the Official Lists and Indexes by the ruling in the present Opinion. The issue is left open for subsequent workers to follow the precepts of the Code or to make new proposals to the Commission.